

titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 4409. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 303 East Mississippi Avenue in Elwood, Illinois, as the "Lawrence M. 'Larry' Walsh Sr. Post Office".

S. 4684. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 440 Arapahoe Street in Thermopolis, Wyoming, as the "Robert L. Brown Post Office".

RECOGNIZING 155TH ANNIVERSARY OF 13TH AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BASS), the distinguished chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 155th anniversary of the ratification of the 13th Amendment.

On December 18, 1865, the 13th Amendment was ratified, officially ending more than 256 years of enslavement in the United States for nearly 4 million enslaved African Americans.

The 13th Amendment provides that: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

After the Civil War, the 13th Amendment was the first of three reconstruction amendments adopted. The loophole sentence, however, "except as a punishment for crime," allowed for African Americans to continue cruel, involuntary labor under what is known as the Black Codes.

To be enslaved, specific laws were passed to ensure that African Americans would be constantly arrested, and then the government would lease human beings out. As African Americans continued to be viewed as property, the government leased people out to businesses, farms, and other types of profit-making ventures.

I would like to acknowledge the former chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, and the CBC's resident historian, to lead this Special Order hour acknowledging this very important anniversary.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman BASS very much for those very kind words, and I thank her for her friendship and for her leadership over the last 2 years as she has led the 55 men and women of the Congressional Black Caucus. I certainly know from past experience that it is a daunting challenge to lead such a caucus. But I thank her so much for her leadership, and I look forward to the future leadership of our new chair, Congresswoman JOYCE BEATTY.

Today, the Congressional Black Caucus is convening to present a Special

Order, recognizing the 155th anniversary of the ratification of the 13th Amendment.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members will have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I have said for years that the passage and ratification of the 13th Amendment is one of the most significant pieces of legislation ever considered by this body. Had Congress and the States failed to eliminate the despicable institution of slavery, the American experiment would have failed and failed miserably.

This afternoon, the Congressional Black Caucus lifts up this American history for the American people to see and understand.

In the year 1860, the Republican candidate for President was Abraham Lincoln. Three candidates opposed Lincoln: Stephen Douglas from Illinois, representing the Northern wing of the Democratic Party; John Breckinridge from Kentucky, representing the Southern wing of the Democratic Party; and John Bell from Tennessee, representing the Constitutional Union Party.

During this election, Mr. Speaker, the Southern States, the slaveholding Southern States, were very fearful that, if elected, Abraham Lincoln would find a way to end slavery and deprive them of their slaves.

Over a period of 240 years, southern plantation owners had purchased African citizens who had been transshipped to the United States from the continent of Africa.

□ 1630

The original Constitution, which was effective March 4, 1789, addressed the issue of slavery. It contained a provision that would maintain the slave trade for at least 20 years after the ratification of the Constitution, until January 1, 1809. Though the legal end of the slave trade occurred in 1809, slave trafficking continued, to be sure.

Slave women were impregnated by males of both races and encouraged to bear large numbers of children. By 1860, Mr. Speaker, there were nearly 4 million slaves in the United States, mostly in Southern States. The border States of Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, and West Virginia also had a large number of slaves.

On November 6, 1860, Mr. Speaker, it was the Presidential election. The American voters spoke, and did they speak loudly. Abraham Lincoln became the 16th President of the United States of America, winning a very large number of electoral votes.

Immediately following his election, Southern States, 11 Southern States

began seceding from the Union, and that is the map I have here to my left.

The first State to secede was South Carolina, right away, on December 20; Mississippi, January 9; followed by Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas.

Then after those seven States had seceded from the Union, Abraham Lincoln takes the oath of office and becomes the 16th President of the United States. The oath of office took place on March 3. Today, as we all know, it is January 20, but during those times it was March 3.

After Lincoln was installed and inaugurated as President, four more States seceded from the Union. They were Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the United States is faced with a constitutional crisis of monumental proportions. Eleven States, these 11 Southern States, are now considering themselves a separate nation. They refer to themselves as the Confederate States of America.

The so-called Confederate States were formally created on March 11, a mere 8 days following Lincoln's inauguration. The Confederate States of America adopted a constitution. They created a currency, elected its political leaders, stood up a military, adopted a flag, and attempted to do everything a developing nation would do.

Great tension now existed between the 23 Union States and the 11 Confederate States. So, Mr. Speaker, we all know what happened then. On April 12, 1861, at 4:30 in the morning, Confederate soldiers opened fired upon Union soldiers at Fort Sumter, South Carolina, in the city of Charleston, and the Civil War begins.

It was a brutal war. Southern States had declared war on the Union. Thousands of soldiers lost their lives on both sides of the battle lines.

President Lincoln, Mr. Speaker, became very weary. The war was taking its toll on him. It was taking its toll on the democracy. So on September 22, 1862, Lincoln issued what we now know as the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, announcing that, if the rebels did not end the fighting and rejoin the Union by January 1, 1863, 100 days later, all slaves in the rebellious States would be free.

On January 1, 1863, Lincoln did what he threatened he would do. President Lincoln, using his power as Commander in Chief of the military, issued an executive order. That order is referred to as the historic Emancipation Proclamation.

Mr. Speaker, that proclamation is often recited, and I will recite it here today.

It reads as follows. This is the Emancipation Proclamation. It says:

"On the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the

United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and the naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom."

A very powerful executive order by President Lincoln.

But, Mr. Speaker, Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was monumental. It proclaimed that slaves residing in the States that were in armed rebellion against the Union were free. Union military forces descended upon Southern States to quiet the rebellion and to bring freedom to the slaves.

But, Mr. Speaker, there was great dispute—great dispute—among the legal scholars of that day as to the legal effect of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Lincoln took the position that, as Commander in Chief, he possessed the authority to enter orders that would deprive the enemy of any instruments that would aid them in winning the war. The slaves were a major asset to the slaveholders who were in rebellion. So Lincoln took the position that he possessed the power, the absolute power as Commander in Chief, to free the slaves.

But some scholars argued that the legal effect of the proclamation was doubtful. It was a singular act of the President, they said, without congressional approval or popular vote. There was some question whether the effect of the proclamation would cease at the end of the war, some question how the Supreme Court would rule if the President's order was eventually judicially reviewed.

On April 8, 1864, right in the middle of the war, Mr. Speaker, just before the Presidential election, the United States Senate passed a 13th Amendment to the Constitution, and it needed the approval of this body, the House of Representatives, for it to become law. But House approval was uncertain.

So, 7 months later, after it had passed the Senate, 7 months later, on November 8, 1864, Lincoln was then re-elected. Lincoln was determined now to take ownership of this legislation to abolish slavery. Lincoln demanded that this body, the House of Representatives, pass the legislation that had been passed by the Senate.

Lincoln's election platform had promised that slavery would be abolished by amendment. Lincoln demanded action. White Northern abolitionists, Black abolitionists, demanded action. The war was now at a fever's pitch. Abolition, Mr. Speaker, had to happen.

On January 31, 1865, finally, the House of Representatives, this body, finally took up the question of passage of the 13th Amendment. When the vote was taken that day, the 13th Amendment passed by a two-vote margin, a

two-vote margin above the needed two-thirds majority. The vote was 119–56.

History reports, Mr. Speaker, that the galleries in this Chamber, the galleries which I see at this moment, the galleries were boisterous. There was applause. Women and men cried. They waived their handkerchiefs as the House of Representatives passed the 13th Amendment. It was a grand, grand event.

Mr. Speaker, in the final vote, all 86 House Republicans voted in favor of the 13th Amendment, along with 15 Democrats, 14 unconditional Unionists, and 4 Union men. The opposition came from 50 Democrats and 6 Union men.

To amend the Constitution, not only does an amendment need to pass both Houses of Congress, but it must be ratified by three-fourths of the States.

After the passage by the Senate and the House, the ratification process begins. On February 1, 1865, the very, very next day, the following day, though not required, President Lincoln signed the 13th Amendment, beginning ratification. It had to be ratified by 27 States.

Ratification is now underway. The first State, as you can image, Mr. Speaker, was Lincoln's home State of Illinois, the very next day, February 1, 1865, followed by Michigan, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Missouri, Maine, Kansas, Massachusetts, Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Nevada, Louisiana, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Vermont, Tennessee, and Arkansas.

And later that day, Arkansas, which is Mr. DAVIS' home State—I saw Mr. DAVIS walk on the floor a moment ago. Arkansas ratified the amendment on April 14, 1865.

And later that day, President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated here in Washington, D.C. But ratification continued, and they had needed six more States.

On May 4, 1865, it was Connecticut, followed by New Hampshire, followed by South Carolina, followed by Alabama and then my home State of North Carolina on December 4, 1865. And then, finally, Mr. Speaker, on December 6 of 1865, the final State of Georgia ratified the 13th Amendment.

When the State of Georgia ratified the 13th Amendment on December 6, 1865, 245 years of slavery legally ended. Four million slaves are free. The former slaves now begin a long and difficult period of reconstruction.

In 1868, the former slaves became citizens, with the 14th Amendment. They obtained the right to vote in 1870 under the 15th Amendment.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, December 6 is Abolition Day in America, and we should observe it and recognize this history. As elected Members of Congress, Black and White, Democrat and Republican, we must rededicate ourselves to the complete elimination of intentional and systemic racism in America. Mr. Speaker, this is our challenge.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS).

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, the period during which slavery legally existed represents the most horrific and most sordid period in the history of the United States; therefore, I commend and thank Representative G.K. BUTTERFIELD for facilitating and anchoring this Special Order highlighting the importance and relevance and impact of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments on changing America.

Of course, we know that the 13th Amendment abolished slavery, the 14th Amendment gave Blacks and former slaves citizenship, and the 15th Amendment gave newly freed slaves the right to vote.

The period preceding, during, and after the Civil War, known as Reconstruction, is not only one of the most sordid, but the most violent and most repressive periods in our history.

The most interesting part of all of this, though, is not yesterday. The most interesting part is that there are individuals and groups in our country today who are attempting to take us back to that period, and we can never let that happen.

□ 1645

In U.S. News Today, there is an article defining how some historians, some boards of education, some school boards have attempted to rewrite and teach a history that is very different than the real history.

When you consider the number of individuals who are part of the mass incarceration system who are forced to work for nothing and whose rights are suspended, that takes us back a ways. And when you consider efforts to prevent and make it difficult or basically impossible for people to vote, that nullifies the 15th Amendment.

So you see, Brother BUTTERFIELD, when you consider the times that we are in, one would have to conclude that the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments are all under serious attack, and we must glory in the fact that we have overcome some of the obstacles, but we also must be vigilant, vigilant to the extent of never going back to that period.

We must be able to say even as a 12-year old girl said when she wrote a little poem that said: No chains on my hands, no chains on my feet, but the chains on my mind are keeping me from being free.

So I thank you again for anchoring this Special Order, and I thank you for reminding us that freedom is a hard-won thing. Each generation has to win it and win it again.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Thank you, Congressman DAVIS, for your passionate leadership. You will recall, Congressman, that 5 years ago, President Obama graced us with his presence when we celebrated the 150th anniversary of the 13th Amendment, and your eloquence this afternoon really adds to that history.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I also thank the gentleman for bringing us together on such an important moment, and of course, as he reflected on the fact that I think we were together just a few years ago in the National Archives commemorating the importance of these amendments, but also the Emancipation Proclamation.

And for those of us in Texas or in places past the Mississippi, if I might start with the question of freedom, we did not get the full impact of freedom until 1865. Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the slaves free with his pronouncement in 1863, and then it took General Granger 2 years to come and present that to those of us west of the Mississippi.

This is why I think this moment on the floor of the House, Mr. Speaker and Mr. BUTTERFIELD, is a sacred and somber moment. We can declare this a normal course of business, Mr. MFUME, that we are on the floor debating, as we usually do, but I really call this a sacred moment because it is a moment to educate the American people. It is a moment to go full circle, if you will, to all of the social justice advocacies that we have done, all of the issues that pretended to divide us.

I think the reason is that, does anyone understand the legacy of those who are descendants of enslaved Africans?

That we had to wait for an amendment to give us the fullness of a human being. We were not counted as human beings fully when the Constitution was written.

Just imagine coming from a legacy where you were not counted as one, you were counted less than one. And until this amendment, the idea of slavery of which we had been property, counted as property. So I think it is important to read the 13th Amendment: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been fully convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction. Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

Think of that. Even indentured servants had a different status than anyone who was a descendent of enslaved Africans who came to this country in 1619 and a little bit before. That is what we discuss today. That is the issue of the 13th Amendment. And it is important to realize that the Framers never used the words slave, shareholder, master, or slavery anywhere in the Constitution. That is almost to say that we had no valid space even in a negative connotation.

So to actually realize why this is so sacred, let me give you some of history. By 1861, when the Civil War broke out, more than four million people—nearly all of them African decent—were enslaved in 15 Southern and border States. By 1862, President Abraham Lincoln came to believe firmly that emancipating enslaved people in the

South would help the Union crush the Confederate rebellion and win the Civil War. We became a practical part of saving the Union. We became the cornerstone, the descendants of enslaved Africans.

The question of slavery was not based upon the brutality of the separation of families, the beating that was suffered, the sheer brutality of it. No, it was not that. I do not find fault for that era, but people need to understand that it was not because someone bowed their heads—they were the abolitionists—and said, Oh, how sad it is that human beings are being held in bondage. We became a calculating force.

But look at the numbers. Four million enslaved. One would wonder why this is a sacred moment on the floor of the House.

So Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which took effect in 1863, announced that all enslaved people held in the States—then in rebellion against the United States—shall be then there forward and forever free.

But the Emancipation Proclamation itself did not end slavery in the United States, as it only applied to the 11 Confederate States then at war against the Union.

Remember, we became the practical cornerstone of trying to end the war, to stop the rebellion, and to preserve the Union. I am glad the Union was preserved. I am glad we are the United States of America.

Yet it is so crucial in the understanding of even this year of 2020, even understanding the horrors of George Floyd's death, what his family still suffers, and why there was such a rage of young people and why the words "Black Lives Matter" came because of the brutality of our history, and here, in the 21st century, we are still suffering from the inequities of those that did not understand not only the question of justice, but also the question of the brutality and the history of slavery.

Maybe there would have been a better understanding if a little history was woven into where we are today. As I indicated, the Emancipation Proclamation did not do it because, as it said, it did not deal with States like Massachusetts and Ohio, to my understanding. It did not deal with those States.

In April 1864, the United States Senate passed a proposed amendment banning slavery with the necessary two-thirds majority, but it faulted in the House of Representatives as more and more Democrats refused to support it. So it was not an easy journey.

When Congress reconvened in December 1864, the emboldened Republicans put the proposed amendment up for a vote again, and Lincoln threw himself in the legislative process, something that gives leadership and substance to the idea of freeing slaves, freeing human beings.

The Constitution now is a stronger document because, as he put himself

into this, Lincoln and his allies see what is before you to focus on the most important thing that this amendment protects the slaves now born and in the United States, but also the millions yet to be born. He was committed to the passage of the 13th Amendment. He authorizes allies to entice House members with plum positions and other inducements, reportedly telling them: I leave it to you to determine how it shall be done, but remember that I am President of the United States, cloaked with immense power, and I expect you to procure the votes.

The whip is on the floor, Mr. CLYBURN. I am all the sudden elevated in my capacity as a whip because this President Lincoln was determined to have his agents on the floor use that authority to get what needed to be done. On January 31, 1865, the House of Representatives passed the proposed amendment with a vote of 119–56, with the required two-thirds majority.

Mr. Speaker, I started out by saying this is a sacred moment. I hope the people at home and our colleagues can see what slavery represented, the brutality of the back of this slave. It didn't take much to be whipped, whipped, and whipped. So scarred, so brutalized that you were almost to death. Or to see a family so like chattel, so like property, so demeaned. Families separated, babies separated. Children becoming more valuable than mom and dad; dad becoming more valuable.

And I remember reading the Slave Narratives, and they said that a woman told her slave husband to come home quick from where he was working in another plantation because they are getting ready to sell their children in one place and her in another. We need you home, she said.

Who would imagine that human beings would have collars around their necks, slavery so brutal that it was unspeakable and could not be heard?

So today, as we commemorate the 155th anniversary of this important step, realizing that it had to go through as an amendment to all of the States, what a journey it was.

I think the words of Sojourner Truth are telling, and that is why we fought to have her busts, her statue here when she was at an abolitionist meeting and someone said, Yes, sir, what do you want? And she said, Ain't I a woman? I born 13 children and I have seen most all of them sold into slavery.

That is why we are on the floor today. We are on the floor today because of the continued misunderstanding of race in this Nation.

We are on the floor today because more of us need to understand what H.R. 40 is all about. It is a magnificent piece of legislation that deals with the questions of the commission to study and develop reparation proposals. It is a reflection of the history of African Americans in this country. It is a simple process of getting a commission that dignifies what happened to us and

looks for reconciliation and restoration and proposal to deal systemically with the ongoing disasters that we see in our respective communities, from disparities in healthcare, COVID-19, housing, the criminal justice system, education. That is why we stand here today.

So I thank Mr. BUTTERFIELD for yielding, and I thank this body for understanding this is a sacred moment.

Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of this body and the Committee on the Judiciary, I am pleased to join my colleagues in this Special Order marking the anniversary of the passage on December 6, 1865 of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution and celebrating the passage of the 14th and 15th Amendments, known as the Civil Rights Amendments.

I thank my colleague, Congressman BUTTERFIELD, for anchoring this important Special Order and am remembering our late colleague, John Lewis, a great and beloved man, who risked and gave his life to make real the promise of those amendments.

The 13th Amendment, the first of the three great Civil War Amendments, was passed in 1865 and abolished slavery.

The 14th Amendment conferred citizenship on the newly emancipated slaves, and the 1st Amendment prohibited abridging the right to vote on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Taken together, these amendments were intended and have the effect of making former slaves, and their descendants, full and equal members of the political community known as the United States of America.

By 1861, when the Civil War broke out, more than 4 million people (nearly all of them of African descent) were enslaved in 15 southern and border states.

By 1862, President Abraham Lincoln came to believe firmly that emancipating enslaved people in the South would help the Union crush the Confederate rebellion and win the Civil War.

Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which took effect in 1863, announced that all enslaved people held in the states "then in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free."

But the Emancipation Proclamation itself did not end slavery in the United States, as it only applied to the 11 Confederate states then at war against the Union, and only to the portion of those states not already under Union control.

To make emancipation permanent would take a constitutional amendment abolishing the institution of slavery itself.

In April 1864, the U.S. Senate passed a proposed amendment banning slavery with the necessary two-thirds majority but it faltered in the House of Representatives, as more and more Democrats refused to support it.

When Congress reconvened in December 1864, the emboldened Republicans put the proposed amendment up for vote again and Lincoln threw himself in the legislative process, inviting individual representatives to his office to discuss the amendment and putting pressure on border-state Unionists (who had previously opposed it) to change their position.

Lincoln was committed to the passage of the 13th Amendment, telling his allies to "see what is before you, to focus on the most im-

portant thing; that this Amendment protects the slaves now born and in the United States, but settles the question for all time for the millions yet to be born."

He authorized his allies to entice House members with plum positions and other inducements, reportedly telling them: "I leave it to you to determine how it shall be done; but remember that I am President of the United States, clothed with immense power, and I expect you to procure those votes."

On January 31, 1865, the House of Representatives passed the proposed amendment with a vote of 119–56, just over the required two-thirds majority, and the following day, Lincoln approved a joint resolution of Congress submitting it to the state legislatures for ratification.

Mr. Speaker, the United States is the world's only superpower and boasts the largest economy in the history of the world and for many years was the world's indispensable nation and the example that all aspiring democracies wished to emulate.

But at the same time, this nation has also been home to many searing instances of social unrest resulting from racial injustices, as we witnessed this year on the streets of big cities and small towns in urban and rural communities.

We saw Americans, by the millions across the country, coming from all races and ages, engaging in what the late John Lewis called "good trouble" by protesting and demanding an end to the systemic racial inequality in our criminal justice system that too often victimizes and disproportionately treats black Americans worse, *ceteris paribus*, when it comes to suspicion, apprehension, arrest, detention, trial, sentencing, and incarceration.

While the brutal deaths of George Floyd in Minneapolis and Breanna Taylor in Louisville shocked the conscience of the nation, most black Americans will tell you what they experienced is not new, but has been occurring for generations, if not centuries.

What is critically important to understand is that the instances of brutal and unfair treatment the nation has witnessed this year cannot be attributed to the proverbial few "bad apples in the bushel" but is instead the foreseeable consequence of systemic racism and racial inequality in the system.

Not just the criminal justice system, but the health care system, the economic system, and the educational system to name the most glaring examples.

To find our way out of this dark time, we need to understand how it came to be.

That is why in January 2019, I introduced H.R. 40, which establishes a commission to examine slavery and discrimination in the colonies and the United States from 1619 to the present and recommend appropriate remedies.

Among other requirements, the commission shall identify (1) the role of federal and state governments in supporting the institution of slavery; (2) forms of discrimination in the public and private sectors against freed slaves and their descendants; and (3) lingering negative effects of slavery on living African-Americans and society.

Official slavery ended with the Civil War and ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment.

But unofficial slavery was continued with the new institution of sharecrop farming, a criminal justice system that would press convicts into

work once done by slaves, and labor policies that dictated income for work done based upon skin color.

And, of course, all of this was reinforced by the systematic disenfranchisement of black Americans, the "discrete and insular minority" excluded from "those political processes ordinarily to be relied upon to protect" them, to quote Chief Justice Hughes' famous *Carolene Products* Footnote 4.

For these reasons, the history of the United States is intertwined with the history of enslaved Africans in the Americas.

There is blood and there are tears, but there is also redemption and reconciliation.

But to get there, we must have the complete truth and lay our history bare.

It is the light that sheds the way to the more perfect union all Americans want.

The Commission created and empowered by H.R. 40 is a necessary first step in that effort to get to truth and reconciliation about the Original Sin of American Slavery that is necessary to light the way to the beloved community we all seek.

Finally, I join all my colleagues in pointing out that the most fitting and proper means of paying tribute to the beloved John Lewis's extraordinary life is for the Senate to immediately take up and pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, landmark legislation to protect the precious right to vote for all persons and to ensure that our democracy has the tools needed to remain strong.

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Taken together, these amendments were intended and have the effect of making former slaves, and their descendants, full and equal members of the political community known as the United States of America.

Section 2 of the 14th Amendment is noteworthy because it did two important things.

First, it repealed Article I, Section 2, which counted slaves as 3/5 of a person for purposes of taxation and apportionment of seats in the House of Representatives.

Second, it punished states that denied the right to vote to any male citizen over the age of 21 (who was neither a felon nor had fought on the side of the Confederacy during the Civil War) by reducing their population for purposes of representation in Congress.

The Framers knew then, and everyone knows now, that the male citizens over the age of 21 who were being denied the right to vote were the former slaves.

The Framers of the 14th Amendment also knew which states were denying these citizens the right to vote.

The Framers could have identified those states by name but elected not to do so.

They chose not to do so because that would have required them to despoil the sanctity and revolutionary character of the Constitution by having to acknowledge explicitly that slavery had existed legally in a country founded on the “self-evident truth” that “all men are created equal.”

It is for this reason that the Framers never used the words “slave,” “slaveholder,” “master,” or “slavery” anywhere in the original Constitution.

The single reference in the Amendments is the declaration in the 13th Amendment that “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.”

The reason this is important is because it shows that when it comes to matters of race and politics in America, the Framers and Congress have always been masters of writing in code so as not to bruise the feelings or upset the tender sensibilities of their fellow citizens in the Southern states.

The Framers and Congress were practiced in the art of expressing their true views and achieving their objectives without enshrining in the Constitution or laws the fact that certain of their countrymen trafficked in racism.

By 1861, when the Civil War broke out, more than 4 million people (nearly all of them of African descent) were enslaved in 15 southern and border states.

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ducements, reportedly telling them: “I leave it to you to determine how it shall be done; but remember that I am President of the United States, clothed with immense power, and I expect you to procure those votes.”

On January 31, 1865, the House of Representatives passed the proposed amendment with a vote of 119–56, just over the required two-thirds majority, and the following day, Lincoln approved a joint resolution of Congress submitting it to the state legislatures for ratification.

Mr. Speaker, let me recite the opening sentence of Section 1 of the 14th Amendment: “All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.”

This text was and is a clear repudiation of the infamous Supreme Court’s 1857 decision in *Dred Scott*, in which Chief Justice Roger Taney wrote that a black man, was so inferior to the white man that he had no rights the white man was bound to respect, and could never, even if born free, claim rights of citizenship under the federal constitution.

The next clause in Section 1 states: “No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States.”

This greatly expanded the civil and legal rights of all American citizens by protecting them from infringement by the states as well as by the federal government.

The third clause, “nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty or property, without due process of law,” expanded the due process clause of the Fifth Amendment to apply to the states as well as the federal government.

Over time, this clause has been interpreted to guarantee a wide array of rights against infringement by the states, including those enumerated in the Bill of Rights (freedom of speech, free exercise of religion, right to bear arms, etc.) as well as the right to privacy and other fundamental rights not mentioned elsewhere in the Constitution.

Finally, the “equal protection clause” (“nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws”) was clearly intended to stop state governments from discriminating against black Americans, and over the years would play a key role in many landmark civil rights cases.

It should be noted also, Mr. Speaker, that Section 2 of the 14th Amendment authorized the federal government to punish states that violated or abridged their citizens’ right to vote by proportionally reducing the states’ representation in Congress, and mandated that anyone who “engaged in insurrection” against the United States could not hold civil, military, or elected office (without the approval of two-thirds of the House and Senate).

And Section 5 of the 14th Amendment gave Congress “the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.”

In giving Congress power to pass laws to safeguard the sweeping provisions of Section 1, in particular, the 14th Amendment effectively altered the balance of power between the federal and state governments in the United States.

Nearly a century later, Congress would use this authority to pass landmark civil rights legislation, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The 15th Amendment granting African-American men the right to vote was adopted into the U.S. Constitution in 1870.

The 15th Amendment states: “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.”

Despite the amendment, by the late 1870s discriminatory practices were used to prevent blacks from exercising their right to vote, especially in the South.

It wasn’t until the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that legal barriers were outlawed at the state and local levels if they denied African-Americans their right to vote under the 15th Amendment.

Mr. Speaker, the United States is the world’s only superpower and boasts the largest economy in the history of the world and for many years was the world’s indispensable nation and the example that all aspiring democracies wished to emulate.

But at the same time, this nation has also been home to many searing instances of social unrest resulting from racial injustices, as we witnessed this year on the streets of big cities and small towns in urban and rural communities.

We saw Americans, by the millions across the country, coming from all races and ages, engaging in what the late John Lewis called “good trouble” by protesting and demanding an end to the systemic racial inequality in our criminal justice system that too often victimizes and disproportionately treats black Americans worse, *ceteris paribus*, when it comes to suspicion, apprehension, arrest, detention, trial, sentencing, and incarceration.

While the brutal deaths of George Floyd in Minneapolis and Breanna Taylor in Louisville shocked the conscience of the nation, most black Americans will tell you what they experienced is not new, but has been occurring for generations, if not centuries.

What is critically important to understand is that the instances of brutal and unfair treatment the nation has witnessed this year cannot be attributed to the proverbial few “bad apples in the bushel” but is instead the foreseeable consequence of systemic racism and racial inequality in the system.

Not just the criminal justice system, but the health care system, the economic system, and the educational system to name the most glaring examples.

To find our way out of this dark time, we need to understand how it came to be.

That is why in January 2019, I introduced H.R. 40, which establishes a commission to examine slavery and discrimination in the colonies and the United States from 1619 to the present and recommend appropriate remedies.

Among other requirements, the commission shall identify (1) the role of federal and state governments in supporting the institution of slavery; (2) forms of discrimination in the public and private sectors against freed slaves and their descendants; and (3) lingering negative effects of slavery on living African-Americans and society.

Official slavery ended with the Civil War and ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment.

But unofficial slavery was continued with the new institution of sharecrop farming, a criminal justice system that would press convicts into work once done by slaves, and labor policies

that dictated income for work done based upon skin color.

And, of course, all of this was reinforced by the systematic disenfranchisement of black Americans, the “discrete and insular minority” excluded from “those political processes ordinarily to be relied upon to protect” them, to quote Chief Justice Hughes’ famous *Carolene Products* Footnote 4.

For these reasons, the history of the United States is intertwined with the history of enslaved Africans in the Americas.

There is blood and there are tears, but there is also redemption and reconciliation.

But to get there, we must have the complete truth and lay our history bare.

It is the light that sheds the way to the more perfect union all Americans want.

The Commission created and empowered by H.R. 40 is a necessary first step in that effort to get to truth and reconciliation about the Original Sin of American Slavery that is necessary to light the way to the beloved community we all seek.

Finally, I join all my colleagues in pointing out that the most fitting and proper means of paying tribute to the beloved John Lewis’s extraordinary life is for the Senate to immediately take up and pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, landmark legislation to protect the precious right to vote for all persons and to ensure that our democracy has the tools needed to remain strong.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Congresswoman for delineating the important difference between the Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th Amendment. The Proclamation was a heroic action of President Lincoln; the 13th amendment was a historic action of this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN), the Democratic whip of the House.

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman BUTTERFIELD for yielding to me to talk on this very momentous occasion. I thank him for bringing attention to this issue, the 155th anniversary of the ratification of the 13th Amendment.

Now, having not listened to all of the discussion before, and I hope I am not too repetitive here, but I want to bring to the attention of all here this evening and our listeners two conflicting events.

□ 1700

Now, we often hear talk of the Emancipation Proclamation. The fact of the matter is, there were two Emancipation Proclamations, the first one freeing the formerly enslaved living in the District of Columbia, and that became effective upon its signing in 1862.

The second one, also written in 1862 and signed by President Abraham Lincoln, was to become effective January 1, 1863, and that was to free the other enslaved people in the former slave States, which meant that in those States that did not have officially sanctioned slavery but did have slaves, in order for them to be free and in order for the descendants of those from the District of Columbia and those affected by those two proclamations, we

needed a constitutional amendment, because as we know, executive orders could very well change with the next executive.

So Abraham Lincoln set out to lay the groundwork for the Thirteenth Amendment, and so we are here celebrating the 155th anniversary of that.

But we also this week will be celebrating the 150th anniversary of another momentous event. 150 years ago come Saturday, we will commemorate the swearing in to this august body the first African American to serve in the United States Congress, Joseph H. Rainey.

Joseph Rainey was from Georgetown, South Carolina, and early in his life moved to Charleston. He worked as a barber. His father was a barber, and he took up the barbering trade, and made enough money as a barber to purchase his and his family’s freedom.

Now, the interesting thing about this is that I often talk about the French historian Alexis de Tocqueville, who came to this country in the 1830s to study our penal system, but while here, he saw what he considered to be a certain magic about this country. Back around 1836, he wrote a book, a two-volume book, called “*Democracy in America*.”

Now, de Tocqueville, in trying to figure out what it was that he considered to be magical about this country, wrote in those books this little phrase:

America is not great because it is more enlightened than any other nation . . .

Just think about that, not more enlightened than any other nation, because we had slavery. This was the 1830s. That was not an enlightened institution.

But, he said:

. . . rather, because it has always been able to repair its faults.

Just think about that. De Tocqueville said that this country is great because it is able to repair its faults, writing that at a time when we had slavery in this country in the 1830s. It was some 30 years later when slavery was abolished.

Now, the thing that I like to point out is the fact that we talk about all of these things that happened during Reconstruction, and most times the things we are talking about did not happen during Reconstruction, they happened after Reconstruction.

Reconstruction was ushered in by the freeing of slaves in 1863. It came to an end in 1877 when Rutherford B. Hayes removed all of the Federal oversight and this country lapsed into a period that we call the Jim Crow era starting around 1877 and lasting all the way up to *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954.

Now, I wanted to point that out tonight as we celebrate these milestones in our history, the 155th anniversary of the Thirteenth Amendment and we will be celebrating this week the 150th anniversary of the first African American to come to this august body. But I want to point out something interesting about that.

The last African American to serve in that century, to serve in this body, left Congress in 1897, George Washington Murray, the last from South Carolina.

Now, I know G.K. BUTTERFIELD will get up and tell you about 1901, when Mr. White left the Congress and left with that great speech, *Like the Phoenix*, but in South Carolina, the first State to give an African American to this body, the last one, George Washington Murray, left in 1897, and there was not another person of color to represent South Carolina until I got elected in 1992, 95 years later.

Why? Because of something called voter suppression.

I think that a lot of these former slave States have gone back into history and ripped out the textbooks, and we are seeing voter suppression being practiced today much like it was practiced back in the 19th century when they successfully removed all people of color from elective office.

So I want to thank G.K. BUTTERFIELD for bringing attention to this today. It gives us an opportunity to ask the people of the country to really think about this period of time and think about what we are experiencing today.

Think about what is going on in the State of Georgia today, when we see interposition and nullification falling from the lips of the President of the United States in trying to overturn an election, much like they did that ran all Blacks out of Congress and much as they did that took Blacks out of elective office, took Blacks out of schools to be educated, all those things, and made it illegal for people of color to even get an education.

I would hope that during this period of time, the people of this country will think a little bit about what is going on around us and just remember there is precedence for what the President of the United States is doing today.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. CLYBURN very much for his comments tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I would inquire how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) has 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I have 12 minutes remaining and I have four speakers. I will try to divide it up 3 minutes each.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) for allowing me to share in this commemoration.

I rise to commemorate the 155th anniversary of the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution.

155 years ago, slavery was abolished in the United States after Georgia’s State legislature ratified the Thirteenth Amendment, pushing it over the

three-fourths requirement. This was a monumental step for civil rights in America, the first of three constitutional amendments during the Reconstruction period that sought equality for the former slaves and their descendants, Black Americans.

Unfortunately, we know that these amendments did not achieve equality, and in fact outraged many of the former slaveholders.

Slavery was the backbone of the southern economy and way of life. Systems like that do not disappear overnight.

After slavery was abolished, sharecropping came in its place; in theory, free and fair, but in practice, anything but.

The Ku Klux Klan was organized by former Confederate officers to violently keep Black people in their places.

The exception written into the Thirteenth Amendment that allowed involuntary servitude as a punishment upon conviction of a crime gave rise to what was known as the chain gang: free prison labor, which still exists in many places today.

Although the Thirteenth Amendment passed, southern legislatures enacted Black Codes and Jim Crow laws, legislation that technically abided by the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, but still allowed discrimination against Black Americans, maintaining white supremacy and still giving White Americans preferential treatment.

This persisted up through the second half of the 20th century and persisted until the blood, sweat, and tears of the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s. John Lewis, JIM CLYBURN, BENNIE THOMPSON, Hosea Williams, Joe Lowery, Medgar Evers put their lives on the line to stand up for the humanity of Black Americans.

We often hear that slavery has been over for a long time, 155 years. It may be long for an individual, but not for a nation. But we should make clear and make no mistake about it that the legacy of slavery still haunts America and it still handicaps our ability to realize the noble principles that this country stands for, that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, keeping in mind that we have made a lot of progress, but we are not where we need to go. There is still much work to do.

Mr. Speaker, I challenge my colleagues in this body to keep in mind and ask themselves a question: What are we doing today to make America a more perfect union for the next 155 years?

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Financial Services.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague, the gen-

tleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD), for yielding, and I commend him for organizing this Special Order on the 155th anniversary of the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and the important relationship between the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments.

Since our founding, the United States has been engaged in a constant struggle to realize the full promise and potential of our founding principles, most especially the right for all people, regardless of race, color, or gender, to vote and participate in our democracy.

Mr. Speaker, despite the fact it has been more than 150 years from the passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, I was absolutely horrified by the level of voter suppression that took place in the last election.

The President and some Members of this body falsely claim that there was voting fraud, while courts have dismissed 43 cases the President's legal team has brought.

What is underappreciated and not discussed is the lengths the President and Republicans and States across the country went to to stop minorities from voting: fake vote-by-mail boxes, racist robocalls encouraging Blacks not to vote by mail, and the President's absolute sabotage of the United States Postal Service to stop people from voting.

Mr. Speaker, the next Congress and the new administration must come together to strengthen voting rights next year. We cannot wait.

□ 1715

Those who fought and died for the right to vote must be remembered, and we honor their work by ensuring future generations have the right to vote.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. How much time remains, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from North Carolina has 6 minutes remaining.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. MCBATH).

Mrs. MCBATH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from North Carolina, Representative BUTTERFIELD, for yielding.

Yesterday, we observed the anniversary of the ratification of the 13th Amendment, which provided that "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude . . . shall exist within the United States."

It was one of the most dramatic expansions of civil rights in American history, and for the first time, our Constitution made mention of the institution of slavery.

155 years ago, the self-evident truth that all men are created equal had not been fully realized. But with every generation, with every chapter written in America's story, the people of this Nation have fought to secure the unalienable rights which were endowed by our Creator.

As we enter a new era, we must not forget that we stand on the shoulders of those who came before us, giants like John Lewis, Elijah Cummings, and C.T. Vivian who helped pave the way for millions of little boys and little girls who believed that they could do anything that they set their minds to, that they could become whomever they wanted to be.

155 years after slavery, we reflect on how far this Nation has truly come. There are many who lived a century ago who would not believe that America today would welcome the great-grandchildren of slaves to serve their communities and their country and our government.

We commemorate that long march toward justice and celebrate all who have played a role in making the lives of their children better than their own.

Today, and every day, we must continue the work of all those whose shoulders we now stand upon. We must continue to strive toward that more perfect Union, toward a future free from hatred, bigotry, and violence.

The work we do in this Chamber can advance the cause for freedom, justice, and peace. Each and every day, I pray that we continue to rise to meet that moment.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her very powerful words.

At this time, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. MFUME).

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina for convening us to commemorate this 155th anniversary of the ratification of our 13th Amendment.

It is difficult sometimes for many of us to look back at history because it was so painful, but it is important so that we understand where we are and how we got here.

The enslavement of the Negro, the extermination of the Indian, the annexation of the Hispanic made, in many respects, the birth of our Republic an iniquitous conception. It was conceived under the concept that White men were superior to Black men and, therefore, entitled to oppress them, harass them, and, if necessary, destroy them.

We all talk about, as has been mentioned here today, the words of the Declaration of Independence and how this is a nation that believes that all men and women are created equal and that we are endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among those shall be life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

But the great historian John Hope Franklin reminded us that, many years after those words were written, we still existed in a society where slavery was the order of the day. In fact, it was the great historian John Hope Franklin who referred to it as the great evil institution of American servitude.

It would be the 13th Amendment that would, to a large extent, end that and give us what we are celebrating here today.

But even after Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, it was still several years before we got to the 13th Amendment, which ended slavery; the 14th Amendment, which guaranteed citizenship and due process; and then the 15th Amendment, which gave us and ratified for us the right to vote.

I think that, without a doubt, when we look back on all that has happened, particularly considering how we got here, that this commemoration is important. It is overdue. It ought to be an annual celebration.

I, again, thank the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina for convening us.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from North Carolina has expired.

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 155th anniversary of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America. Passed by the House of Representatives on January 31, 1865, the 13th Amendment was ratified and put into effect on December 6, 1865.

Section 1 of the 13th Amendment states, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

This amendment is what allows Black people the legal status to be free, unbound, and unchained here in our country. If this amendment were not in place, we would still be slaves and subject to the forced subjugation of others. Before the ratification of this amendment, Black people in the U.S. were enslaved and owned by other people. Now, we are owned by no one.

This legacy in the U.S., this original sin, is recognized as an abomination to mankind. As I travel throughout the world, I am reminded of the greatness of our nation, but I am also intensely aware of the faults, shortcomings, and injustices that still plague us today. It is a sad reflection on our society that we are still fighting for complete and pure freedom in our country, to share in the fundamental rights guaranteed by our constitution to every person.

It is without question that we love this country and for most people, know no other place to call home. We have struggled, fought, and even died along the path to freedom. Our very existence has been met with severe hardships. No one today can imagine the horrors that slaves were subjected to daily.

However, there are those who, even today, say that slavery for Black people was a good thing and a blessing in disguise. This errant view is void of reality and ridiculous on its face.

The evils of slavery are too many to comprehensively and adequately express. There are thousands of helpless people who were bound, shackled, whipped, quartered, hung, burned and endured unspeakable horrors whose stories will never be told.

The lasting effects of slavery permeate many aspects of society today. Institutionalized racism, discrimination and prejudices are each lasting remnants of our history and are present with us even now. Our challenge is to continue to fight to wipe out these insidious vestiges of a time long passed and a gruesome period of every day American life.

Our nation will be forever stained with the blood of slavery. Our nation will be forever blessed by the freedom and liberty that the ratification of the 13th Amendment brings. Let us continue the never ending fight for freedom as we move towards prosperity for everyone.

While the 13th Amendment legally ended slavery in the United States, we know that for many it did not end in 1865. Thousands of Black people were either uninformed of their liberty or just outright denied their rights to be free. They were forced into continued servitude and grueling work to support the needs of their owners and masters. In Texas, word of freedom and liberation from the slave owners and masters of plantations and farms did not reach Black people until a whole two years later.

Slavery in the United States was not just a way of life, but an oppressive institution that was designed to profit off of the free labor of Black folk. It was extremely prosperous. It is without question that our nation was built on the backs of Black people who continuously suffered the indignities, degradation and humiliation of being enslaved.

We cannot afford to rest, sleep or be caught off guard. Even though the 13th Amendment is in place, it does not mean that it cannot be changed. All we truly have to do is look at the last administration and its constant attacks on the freedom of people in the U.S. and its attacks on our democratic institutions. Our freedom must be protected.

Please allow me to briefly turn my attention to the relationship between the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments. The 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, proposed after the Civil War, granted enslaved Black people freedom, citizenship, and the right to vote. The 15th Amendment declared that the right of U.S. citizens to vote could "not be abridged or denied" by any state "on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." These rights are still being attacked by those who would deny all people of color freedom, citizenship and the fundamental right to vote. The third and final Amendment during the Reconstruction Era—was adopted to protect the freedoms outlined in the 13th and 14th Amendments. Make no mistake—Reconstruction for Black people was devastating and a gross erosion of rights that were supposed to be guaranteed.

Mr. Speaker, our country is no longer divided between free states and slave states. We are now one. While we take this time to recognize and celebrate this critical benchmark in the history of our country, we must continue to fight to be the land of the free.

MARKING RATIFICATION OF 13TH AMENDMENT

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I thank all the speakers this evening. I understand the time has been precious, and I thank all of them for their patience and willingness to participate.

The 13th Amendment reads as follows: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude . . . shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

This amendment was added to the United States Constitution by an act of

Congress on January 31, 1865, ratified by the requisite number of States on December 6, 1865, 155 years ago.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO GREG WALDEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) for 30 minutes.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, this 30 minutes is a tribute to our leader who is leaving us, GREG WALDEN, the top Republican on the Energy and Commerce Committee and the former chairman, and, obviously, a good friend to everyone on both sides of the aisle.

Knowing that many Members have plenty of meetings that are starting, I am going to yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HUDSON).

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my friend and my colleague, Congressman GREG WALDEN, on his retirement, following more than 20 years representing Oregon's Second District here in Congress.

As a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, Chairman WALDEN has been a real mentor to me. I have seen firsthand Chairman WALDEN's love for his country, dedication to his district, and hard work on so many important priorities for our Nation, like healthcare, energy independence, and telecommunications.

I have so many fond memories of the work we have done together and the time we have spent. I especially enjoyed working with Chairman WALDEN on H.R. 6, landmark legislation to combat the opioid crisis.

Chairman WALDEN, you will be dearly missed, but I wish you, Mylene, Anthony, and your entire family all the best.

I urge my colleagues to join me in thanking Congressman GREG WALDEN for his extraordinary service.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON), also a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I, too, rise today to pay tribute to my good friend and mentor on the Energy and Commerce Committee, GREG WALDEN.

I spent 27 years in the United States Air Force. We lived by a code of conduct every day. We came to work. We embodied those core values of integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all that we do.

In my experience, it is not often that you find people in private life or in other sectors of public life who also embody those same core values, but Chairman GREG WALDEN does.

Whether he was fighting for healthcare changes for the American people, to make America more energy independent and secure, whether he was trying to make sure that Big Tech did not overrun the American people,